

Minutes of SHUG executive committee meeting of December 9, 2003. **(For review)**

The Executive Committee convened by conference call at 1:00 PM EDT on December 9, 2003. 6 of the 11 members were present. The members in attendance were:

Paul Butler (Secretary)
Joanna Krueger (Chair)
Scott Mixture
Nancy Ross
David Vaknin
Angus Wilkinson

Joanna began the meeting with a couple of announcements. First, as discussed at last meeting, an email with our input regarding the proposed plan of using August as one of the two, four month, SNS shutdowns a year was sent to Al Ekkebus along with our request that future requests for such input be directed through the chair. He has thanked us for our prompt input. Second, the heads of the various user groups have been circulating a letter to be signed by each chair regarding user access policies. After some discussion it became clear that there was some confusion regarding which of the topics John Tranquada discussed at the last SHUG meeting were meant to be addressed/supported with this letter. Unfortunately John Tranquada was not present so Joanna suggested she should contact John and get a written clarification. Also she would send a copy of the letter to the rest of the committee.

Joanna turned over the floor to Paul Butler for an update on the elections. Paul indicated that the electronic ballots had gone out Friday, Dec 5, with a total of 71 individuals having currently voted. Paul said that last year there were 228 voters with a fair number coming at the very end immediately following the final reminder notice. Due to the late date at which we got this out, the deadline for voting was put at Dec 23, a Tuesday, rather than Wednesday the 17th. Paul said he decided that while Wednesday was probably the better day of the week, having the deadline be Christmas eve would probably not be the best. Hopefully in the future the process will be started earlier. Paul also suggested it might be a good idea to have one final meeting after the elections to wrap up the year.

Next on the agenda was the issue of possible bylaw changes to address issues such as term lengths, term limits, annual meeting requirements etc... Joanna asked for input on what changes might be needed and how we should proceed. Paul Butler stated that he's put quite a deal of thought into these questions and sees no clear cut answers, suggesting that this is really a complicated issue which might best begin by email before starting an oral debate at this meeting. Joanna asked Paul to take the lead of commencing such an email discussion. Paul agreed to do so "after the elections."

Finally Joanna raised the question of the SHUG chair's membership on various advisory boards discussed at the previous meeting (Nov. 10, 2003). While in principle a good

idea, the question of how much extra work this would entail for the chair was raised. The effort could be spread out by either appointing the subcommittee chairs or other alternates to the different committees. After a brief discussion, it was suggested that given our current knowledge of the number of such committees, their role and impact on user issues, the frequency and duration of their meetings, and the amount of effort they might require, it would be best for someone to first make some inquiries before determining the appropriate course of action. As chair, Joanna agreed to do this.

Greg Smith and Al Ekkebus joined the call a little after 10:30. Joanna asked Angus as principle author of the document to begin the discussion. After Angus' presentation of the motivation, Greg asked some questions, with the amount of time requested in the document (10%) being the most important. Some discussion ensued during which several points were made. First of course, Angus indicated the 10% was not meant to be a hard number and that the intent was not to remove a significant fraction of beam time from the regular user program. Along those lines it was also mentioned that the intent of the SHUG document was to indicate the need/desire for such a program and to provide suggestions and guidance for HFIR (and SNS) in the development of such a program which can then be further discussed. The committee also understands tweeking and adjusting of any new program is always needed. The point was also made that the program would be expected to be reviewed as a whole on some regular basis to determine its usefulness. The suggestion was made that a brief report be required of users of such a program. Some concern was expressed about the burden this program might place on scheduling with a fixed amount of time being set aside each cycle prior to knowing how much would actually be needed. The suggestion was made that in terms of a mail-in program the effect on scheduling could be the opposite, providing a number of short duration samples that could be slipped into the inevitable small chunks of beam time that open up at the last minute usually causing a flurry of activity to fill. On the other hand, even a relatively small mail in program could place an additional burden on the technical staff. Also it was suggested that a look at other facilities that provide similar programs would be useful in developing one at HFIR with IPNS mentioned in particular. Greg, indicated he'd already talked to Bryan Chakoumakos, HFIR powder diffractometer instrument scientist. Bryan is very enthusiastic about the idea and Greg agreed that it made sense to use that machine as a testbed for this concept. Greg said that he would draft a document with help from Al and circulate it to the SHUG Executive Committee. With the current schedule indicating that the HFIR powder machine will be coming on-line at the end of 2004 there should be time to get this worked out before its startup.

Having no further business the committee adjourned

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Butler
SHUG Secretary